



James Ellis

Head of Legal and Democratic Services

MEETING : OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
VENUE : VIRTUAL MEETING - ZOOM
DATE : TUESDAY 8 DECEMBER 2020
TIME : 7.00 PM

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

Councillor J Wyllie (Chairman)

Councillors S Bell, M Brady, R Buckmaster, A Curtis, I Devonshire,
H Drake, J Frecknall, M Goldspink (Vice-Chairman), D Hollebbon, J Kaye,
D Snowdon, M Stevenson and N Symonds

Substitutes

Conservative Group: Councillors D Andrews, I Kemp and
A Ward-Booth
Green: Councillor B Crystall
Labour: Councillor C Redfern

*(Note: Substitution arrangements must be notified by the absent Member
to Democratic Services 24 hours before the meeting)*

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DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

1. A Member, present at a meeting of the Authority, or any committee, sub-committee, joint committee or joint sub-committee of the Authority, with a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) in any matter to be considered or being considered at a meeting:
 - must not participate in any discussion of the matter at the meeting;
 - must not participate in any vote taken on the matter at the meeting;
 - must disclose the interest to the meeting, whether registered or not, subject to the provisions of section 32 of the Localism Act 2011;
 - if the interest is not registered and is not the subject of a pending notification, must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest within 28 days;
 - must leave the room while any discussion or voting takes place.
2. A DPI is an interest of a Member or their partner (which means spouse or civil partner, a person with whom they are living as husband or wife, or a person with whom they are living as if they were civil partners) within the descriptions as defined in the Localism Act 2011.
3. The Authority may grant a Member dispensation, but only in limited circumstances, to enable him/her to participate and vote on a matter in which they have a DPI.
4. It is a criminal offence to:

- fail to disclose a disclosable pecuniary interest at a meeting if it is not on the register;
- fail to notify the Monitoring Officer, within 28 days, of a DPI that is not on the register that a Member disclosed to a meeting;
- participate in any discussion or vote on a matter in which a Member has a DPI;
- knowingly or recklessly provide information that is false or misleading in notifying the Monitoring Officer of a DPI or in disclosing such interest to a meeting.

(Note: The criminal penalties available to a court are to impose a fine not exceeding level 5 on the standard scale and disqualification from being a councillor for up to 5 years.)

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AGENDA

1. Apologies

To receive apologies for absence.

2. Minutes - 3 November 2020 (Pages 7 - 26)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 3 November 2020.

3. Chairman's Announcements

4. Declarations of Interest

To receive any Members' Declarations of Interest.

5. Presentation on Policing in East Herts

6. Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Draft Work Programme (Pages 27 - 46)

7. Urgent Items

To consider such other business as, in the opinion of the Chairman of the meeting, is of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration and is not likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information.

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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON TUESDAY 3
NOVEMBER 2020, AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor J Wyllie (Chairman)
Councillors S Bell, M Brady, R Buckmaster,
A Curtis, I Devonshire, H Drake, J Frecknall,
M Goldspink, D Hollebon, I Kemp,
D Snowdon, M Stevenson and N Symonds

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors L Haysey and P Ruffles

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Lorraine Blackburn	- Scrutiny Officer
Richard Cassidy	- Chief Executive
Alex Cook	- Customer Services Team Leader
Jonathan Geall	- Head of Housing and Health
Peter Mannings	- Democratic Services Officer
Tyron Suddes	- Projects and New Business Manager
Su Tarran	- Head of Revenues and Benefits Shared Service
David Thorogood	- Environmental Co-Ordinator

Brad Wheeler	- Senior Licensing and Enforcement Officer
Ben Wood	- Head of Communications, Strategy and Policy

203 APOLOGY

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor Kaye. It was noted that Councillor Kemp was substituting for Councillor Kaye.

204 MINUTES - 15 SEPTEMBER 2020

It was moved by Councillor Goldspink and seconded by Councillor Devonshire that the minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2020 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, this motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2020 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

205 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman said that the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 came into force on Saturday 4 April 2020 to enable councils to hold

remote committee meetings during the Covid-19 pandemic period. This was to ensure local authorities could conduct business during this current public health emergency. This meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee was being held remotely under these regulations, via the Zoom application and was being recorded and live streamed on YouTube.

The Chairman explained why the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS) report had not been included on the Agenda. He said that the CfPS (now called the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny) and the Head of Legal and Democratic Services had advised that the former CfPS wanted to arrange a workshop zoom meeting with all Members of both Overview and Scrutiny and Audit and Governance Committees. The final report would be submitted to Overview and Scrutiny Committee and, if necessary, recommendations would be made to the Executive.

The Chairman referred to the report at the last meeting on Enhancing the Council's working arrangements with registered Social Landlords. He said that this matter was being held over until a larger piece of work was completed but the matter had been included on the Work Programme so that this was kept on the radar of Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

206 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

207 PRESENTATION BY THE LEADER AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE -
HOW THE COUNCIL REACTED TO THE CORONA VIRUS

The Leader and the Chief Executive gave a presentation that detailed the ways that East Herts Council had responded to the ongoing situation regarding Coronavirus. The Leader referred to the pandemic milestones and said that the process of moving into phase three and the exit and into recovery would be the subject of a very long discussion.

The Leader referred in detail to the Council's phase one response back in March. She congratulated Officers on the transition to homeworking in what for some had been very difficult circumstances. She said that the public had not been aware of any break in service during the transition to full homeworking.

The Chief Executive praised the huge effort that had gone into moving Officers to homeworking at very short notice without any significant drops in service. He referred to the work that had been undertaken with the County Council in supporting vulnerable people during the lockdown. He said that the basic systems held up well and the core services were able to keep running. Members were advised that East Herts Council had arranged for 24 rough sleepers to be accommodated in temporary hotel accommodation.

The Chief Executive commented at length about the support the Council had given to local business in terms of retail reliefs and business grants, as well as advice in respect of operating safely within the government guidance. This had included regular

weekend visits to business by Environmental Health Officers and the Police when pubs were allowed to re-open. He said that staff had been asked to complete a Health and Wellbeing Survey and this would be repeated and a range of media was being used to keep in touch with Officers.

The Leader commented on the wider countywide role of the Council and the various operations and forums that were active during the phase one response. She referred in particular to the work of the Community Reassurance Cell and summarised phase two controls and priorities for July to December 2020.

The Chief Executive said that some successful town centre groups had been formed with input from Hertfordshire County Councils, Town Councils, the Police and other groups to create safe spaces for shopping and to support local business. He referred to the economic impact of the current situation for East Herts and local business.

The Leader referred to changing behaviours of customers in terms of increased digital engagement being the biggest legacy of lockdown. She also commented on a number of budgetary pressures including a monthly loss of income of £800,000. The Leader referred to the MTFP budgetary gap of £4m and the need to make net savings of £1m per year for the next two years and £2m for the 2023/24.

The Leader commented on the need for discussions about “agile work” going forward as well the importance of cross departmental working. She

presented some facts and figures in terms of the numbers of cases in East Herts as at 2 November 2020. The Chief Executive talked about the Council's priorities between now and the end of phase two and summarised a number of reflections for the Council from the last eight months.

Following the presentation, Members asked a number of questions of the Leader and the Chief Executive. Members received the presentation.

RESOLVED – that the presentation be received.

208 REVENUES AND BENEFITS ANNUAL REPORT

The Head of the Revenues and Benefits Shared Services submitted a report to update the Committee regarding the Shared Service in terms of performance reporting, other challenges and the budget outturn.

Members were advised that Officers had achieved very good average performance figures over the year in respect of processing housing benefit claims and change events. The Head of the Shared Service said that this performance was key to minimising waiting times for customers experiencing financial difficulty and also maximised the subsidy the Authority received from the government.

The Head of the Shared Service said that caseloads had been consistently reducing for a number of years and there had been a reduction in post last year although there had been a 30% increase on last year's figures already this year.

Members were advised that recovery of overpaid housing benefit was a substantial area of activity with significant amounts of money involved. The Head of the Shared Service referred to some comparison graphs and tables for Stevenage and East Herts. She said that Officers had now got to a point where more debt was being recovered than was being raised.

The Head of the Shared Service commented at length about discretionary housing payments and the increasing pressure from people affected by single room subsidies and from those who were struggling even though in receipt of universal credit. She updated Members in respect of Council Tax Support, which was the local scheme that had replaced Council Tax Benefit in 2013.

Members were also updated as regards to Council Tax in that 1000 new properties had been added each year for the last couple of years and the value of collection had increased. There were some people who were just outside the benefits scheme who were now beginning to struggle with payments of Council Tax each month.

The Head of the Shared Service said that universal credit changed frequently which affected the ability of customers to clear liabilities in respect of Council Tax. She said that last year East Herts Council collected £109.5m and Stevenage Borough Council collected £49m.

Members were reminded of the £56m of business rates that East Herts Council was tasked with

collecting, subject to a number of reliefs that business could apply for, some of which were mandatory and others were discretionary. The Head of the Shared Service explained that less fraud work was currently being carried out by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) due to pressures related to the impact of Covid-19.

Councillor Goldspink referred to the technical terms in the report asked a question about how overpayments arose for customers. The Head of the Shared Service explained that this often arose due to changes in circumstances that had not been communicated to Officers by customers. She also explained that if the Council did not act quickly to changes in circumstances, this counted against the Authority in terms of the subsidies it could receive.

Councillor Snowdon commented on the debt burden and the issue of locating the right people to collect any outstanding arrears. The Head of the Shared Service said that the Council did have access to HMRC data and this assisted Officers in contacting customers to discuss issues such as instalment arrangements and in supporting Officers to try and locate people. Members received the report.

RESOLVED – that the report be received.

209 UPDATE ON SUSTAINABILITY ACTION PLAN

The Head of Housing and Health submitted a report that presented the latest version of the East Herts Sustainability Action Plan. The action plan had been

prepared in order to respond to the carbon neutrality commitment agreed in the Council's Climate Change Motion of July 2019.

The Head of Housing and Health said that Officers would welcome Members' input in respect of the proposed actions and whether these were sufficient to meet the broad objective of the Council's Climate Change Motion of July 2019. He said an update would be submitted to this Committee twice a year and that Officers would monitor and update progress and actions and publish this to the website on a monthly basis.

The Head of Housing and Health said that the third element of the recommendation was an annual update to Members in respect of progress in the reduction in carbon against target, as this was a fundamental element of the climate change motion.

Councillor Goldspink asked if Members could have sight of the carbon assessment tool. She also asked what proposals were intended to switch off lighting automatically at Wallfields in addition to the proposal for LED lighting as well as whether there were any proposals to install shutters for the Office. Councillor Goldspink also questioned the heating grants to encourage people to switching from oil to gas boilers in terms of whether the Council should be encouraging the use of gas boilers.

Councillor Goldspink said that she was very pleased about the improvements to Grange Paddocks Leisure Centre. She commented that the anti-idling campaign

outside schools and town centres was an excellent idea.

The Environmental Sustainability Coordinator said that the Carbon Assessment Tool was an excel spreadsheet which assisted Officers with their deliberations and he was happy to demonstrate this to Members rather than trying to explain it.

Members were advised that LED lighting had been installed both internally and externally at Wallfields and this was zoned. If no Officers were in a particular area of the Wallfields Office, the lights would go off. The Environmental Sustainability Coordinator said that this level of control had been in place for some time and further improvements were planned. He said that there were no plans to install shutters at Wallfields.

The Environmental Sustainability Coordinator advised that there was an externally funded heating grant for up to 20 private sector homes plus 12 properties in the rental sector. He said these grants were to assist people who had a gas main nearby but were not connected to it. Members were advised that gas was more environmentally friendly than home heating oil and cheaper than using bottled gas. He referred to the carbon saving over home heating oil and the matter of fuel poverty as well as the potential for the potential future introduction of a part hydrogen mix into the piped gas network.

Councillor Frecknall asked whether there could be a section on the East Herts website with hints and tips for residents in terms of reducing their carbon

footprint. He asked if there had been provision of £40,000 in the capital programme for solar panels at Wallfields. The Environmental Sustainability Coordinator advised that the £40,000 was in the capital programme and the Head of Property was leading on that particular project for Wallfields, which would include web based metering on Council buildings.

The Environmental Sustainability Coordinator said that access to advice on behavioural change was very important for residents as was signposting residents to the good advice which was available but not readily accessible. He said that the website would be instrumental in terms of informing residents.

Councillor Frecknall proposed and Councillor Drake seconded, a motion that the recommendations detailed in the report, be supported. After being put to the meeting, and a vote taken, this motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – that (A) Members confirmed that the current actions included in the initial iteration of the Sustainability Action Plan met the broad objectives of the Climate Change Motion;

(B) Officers be asked to provide written progress reports to the Committee on a twice yearly basis to add to any views Members might wish to make on the monthly updated published on the council's website; and

(C) Officers be asked to provide Overview and

Scrutiny Committee with an update on the reduction in carbon against target on an annual basis, both in relation the council's activities and across the whole District.

210 EAST HERTS COUNCIL COMPLAINTS 2019-20

The Head of Communications, Strategy and Policy submitted a report that summarised the customer complaints that had been made to the Council. He said this was an annual update and it also included the vexatious complainant policy.

Members were advised that it tended to be Development Management and Operations that the public most complained about and full details were explained in the report. Members were advised that after those 2 areas, the next most complained service areas were Revenues and Benefits and the Housing Service.

The Head of Communications, Strategy and Policy referred to a number of extracts from the local government and social care ombudsman, which was where customers were referred to if they continued to be dissatisfied with East Herts Council's stage one or stage two responses to a complaint.

The Head of Communications, Strategy and Policy said that he believed that the complaints process was healthy and was not necessarily about being right or wrong.

Members were advised that a longstanding issue had

been once of performance in that the Council had not been responding to complaints quickly enough. The Head of Communications, Strategy and Policy explained that Leadership Team had been receiving regular updates and that performance had now improved.

The Head of Communications, Strategy and Policy said that the vexatious complainant policy had not been used and that the current policy did not have the effect that Officers would have liked. He hoped that the new policy would have more impact. The new policy would give Officers more flexibility in terms of how they dealt with people.

Members were advised that losing the label of vexatious would make dealing with complaints more effective as Officers could restrict the volume of contact or limit this to email only by way an example of the scale of intervention. The Head of Communications, Strategy and Policy said the new policy would have to be taken to full Council.

Councillor Goldspink said she had been very concerned in terms of the deficiencies such as the failure to log complaints and the loss of knowledge when Officers left the Authority. She said however that she was very pleased to see that the suggestions of a critical friend had been sought and that these suggestions were being adopted.

Councillor Curtis proposed and Councillor Goldspink seconded, a motion that the issues in the report and progress made to date on addressing them be noted

and that the unreasonable and persistent Behaviour Policy be recommended to Council for approval.

After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, this motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED - that (A) the issues in the report and progress made to date on addressing them be noted; and

(B) the Unreasonable and Persistent Behaviour Policy be recommended to Council for approval.

211 CORPORATE PLAN UPDATE

The Head of Communications, Strategy and Policy and the Projects and New Business Manager submitted a report that provided an update on progress towards meeting the actions and targets set out in the Council's Corporate Plan entitled "East Herts: A Place to Grow".

Members were advised that following the scrutiny review, these reports would be submitted to Overview and Scrutiny instead of Audit and Governance Committee (formerly known as Performance, Audit and Governance Oversight Committee).

The Head of Communications, Strategy and Policy said that was update in terms of progress against the Corporate Plan and some of the actions had changed since January and a refreshed Corporate Plan would be issued towards the end of the financial year.

The Projects and New Business Manager reminded

Members of the four key themes of the Corporate Plan and set the context in terms of the quarter two data that had informed the report, from 1 April to 30 September 2020.

Members were provided with an overview of the progress against the actions detailed in section three of the report and referred to a graph that set out the expected outcomes at the end of quarter two. The Projects and New Business Manager referred in particular to the good work that been undertaken in respect of growing the East Herts lottery.

Members were advised that the carbon assessment tool had been finalised to enable the assessment of the carbon footprint of key projects. In respect of the digital by design thread, the East Herts customer charter had been completed and had been published.

The Projects and New Business Manager said, as a direct impact of Covid-19, two climate change film festivals and two electric vehicle road shows in Hertford and Bishop's Stortford had been cancelled due to Covid-19 restrictions. These events had been rescheduled to take place in Spring 2021.

Members were advised that, in respect of digital by design, work that had been commissioned to reassess customer requirements at Wallfields and improve the customer journey and self-service in the reception had been put on hold as the reception was currently closed and Officers were reassessing future front of house requirements for the new normal.

Members were given a brief overview of the performance health indicators listed under section 4 of the report and Members were given a detailed update in respect of performance indicators which were performing well.

The Projects and New Business Manager covered a number of performance health indicators that were not performing to target such as the time taken to process housing benefit new claims and change events, (perhaps due to Covid-19). Members were advised that the percentage of good satisfaction ratings from the website had dropped and Officers had sought to make the Gov.metric system widget more visible to encourage more customer feedback and the ratings were now starting to improve.

Councillor Goldspink asked about work to assess the carbon footprint of proposals relating to Hertford Theatre in terms of whether this would be done before or after the works were completed. She also asked about the work to make the register of the Council's assets more visible and on the excellent campaign to discourage motorists from leaving vehicle engines idling.

The Projects and New Business Manager said that he would talk to the relevant project leads to get answers to some of the questions raised by Councillor Goldspink. Councillor Buckmaster said that one of the appendices incorrectly stated that strategic site BISH6 had been granted planning permission but that a decision has not yet been made as this was for consideration by Members of Development

Management Committee on 4 November 2020. The Head of Communications, Strategy and Policy apologised for that oversight and said that he would clarify that point with the report author. Members received the report and noted the progress made to date against the corporate plan.

RESOLVED – that the progress against the corporate plan to date, be noted.

212 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME

The Scrutiny Officer submitted a report that presented the consolidated work programme for consideration by Members. She said that the Hertfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner had confirmed that he would be giving a presentation at the next Overview and Scrutiny meeting on 8 December, along with Chief Inspector Orton.

Members were advised that the Head of Operations would be presenting a report from the Parking Task and Finish Group to the Executive on 24 November 2020. The Scrutiny Officer reminded Members that this matter was first presented to the Executive on 11 February. She said however that this matter had been kept under review as the landscape of parking had changed due to Covid-19.

The Scrutiny Officer stated that she had been liaising with the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny regarding holding a Workshop Zoom meeting to enable Members to scrutinise the report that followed the

review of Scrutiny. She said that all Members of Overview and Scrutiny and Audit and Governance Committees would be invited and she was awaiting confirmation that this would take place on 3 December 2020.

Members were advised that the report would be submitted to Overview and Scrutiny and then, if necessary, the Committee could make recommendations to the Executive.

The Scrutiny Officer drew Members' attention to a number of issues which might be of interest and were contained within the Council's Calendar:

- a briefing on 11 November 2020 on the Hertfordshire Growth Board and Capital Projects Review;
- training in respect of building control and social media on 12 November 2020;
- the Director of Public Health would be providing Members with a further briefing on Covid-19 on 18 November 2020 at 2 pm, on how to respond to a Local Outbreak; and
- Clarion Housing will providing a further presentation on 19 November 2020 regarding how they had responded to Covid-19, including an update in relation to Clarion Futures.

The Scrutiny Officer advised that, as development of the Council's Budget and the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) moved forward, the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) had confirmed that they would be providing all Member Training on

Local Government Finance on 1 and 14 December 2020.

In reply to a query from Councillor Kemp regarding diary indications showing one of the above meetings as cancelled, the Scrutiny Officer said that she would be resending a diary invitation to Members shortly.

The Scrutiny Officer responded to a query from Councillor Brady regarding the answer given to a public question by Councillor Williamson at Council on 21 October regarding the capital budget. She said that an all Member Briefing had been arranged for 11 November 2020 regarding a review of capital projects.

It was moved by Councillor Devonshire and seconded by Councillor Goldspink that the draft consolidated Work Programme be approved. After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – that the draft consolidated work programme be approved.

213 URGENT ITEMS

There was no urgent business.

The meeting closed at 9.15 pm

Chairman
Date

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East Herts Council Report

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 8 December 2020

Report by: Scrutiny Officer

Report title: Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Draft Work Programme

Ward(s) affected: All

Summary

- This report reviews actions included in the committee's existing Work Programme and seeks Members' views on any proposed amendments to the ongoing Work Programme.

RECOMMENDATION FOR OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE, that:

(A) The proposed Work Programme, as included in Appendix A, be approved.

1.0 Proposal(s)

1.1 Items previously required, identified or suggested for the Overview and Scrutiny (OS) Work Programme as set out in **Appendix A**. The Appendix is now presented as a consolidated report to include those issues for consideration by Audit and Governance Committee. It was felt that consolidating the work of both Committees in one report would give all Members of both committees a better perspective from the viewpoint of scrutiny.

1.2 Scrutiny committees have the power of influence and are

entitled to review and scrutinise the functions of the Council and the decisions of the Executive. The Committee serves as a 'critical friend' and is not a decision-making body but can make recommendations to the Executive and who must respond formally to recommendations within a given timeframe.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The draft agenda for 2020/21 meetings of Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Audit and Governance Committee is shown in **Appendix A**. The timing of some items shown may have to change depending on availability of essential data (e.g. from central government) external sources and officers.
- 2.2 Members are reminded that for a topic to be valid for Scrutiny it needs to be relevant to the work of the council and impact on a number of residents / or the wider area. In addition, there needs to be evidence, whether readily quantifiable or anecdotal, that this is an issue requiring investigation.
- 2.1 Members are welcome to submit a scrutiny proposal at any time by completing a Scrutiny Proposal Form (Available from the Scrutiny Officer) which will provide officers with sufficient information to assess if it is appropriate for Scrutiny and to ensure their specific questions are addressed. The Scrutiny Officer will then liaise with officers and the Scrutiny Chairman to consider the best way to address the subject and complete a scoping document.
- 2.2 Members are also asked whether there is any training relevant to scrutiny or to the function and remit of the OS Committee that they wish to suggest.
- 2.3 Members are asked to note that while the agenda for this meeting and the draft work programme is limited in terms of items for consideration, the Chairman and Vice Chairman of both O&S and A&G will meet with the Leader and Deputy Leader on 2 December to review both work programmes in

the context of the Council's Forward Plan. Having said, Appendix A has a number of reports for consideration "Looking Forward to 2021". A further update following this meeting will be provided by the Scrutiny Officer.

- 2.4 On 3 December, the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny will be holding a Workshop for Members of both Audit and Governance and Overview and Scrutiny Committees to review the final report following a review of scrutiny at East Herts in March 2020. The Workshop will provide Members with an opportunity to deliberate the contents of the report and on their final recommendations.

3.0 Reason(s)

- 4.1 This report provides an update on the current situation in relation to issues raised by Members.

4.0 Options

- 5.1 The Work Programme will be kept under review by the committee throughout the coming year.

5.0 Risks

- 6.1 The establishment of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee is enshrined in the Local Government Act 2000 (section 9). The 2000 Act obliges local authorities to adopt political management systems with a separate Executive. Various sub sections (of the 2000 Act), set out the powers and duties for Overview and Scrutiny Committees including the right to investigate and make recommendations on anything which is the responsibility of the Executive. Legislative provisions can also be found in the Localism Act 2011 (Schedule 2) with options to retain or re-adopt a "committee system" (section 9B).

- 6.2 Potential risks arise for the council if policies and strategies are

developed and/or enacted without sufficient scrutiny. Approval of an updated Work Programme contributes to the mitigation of this risk by ensuring key activities of the council are scrutinised.

6.0 Implications/Consultations

- 7.1 Scrutiny is an important part of the local democratic process and represents the interests of residents. It holds the Executive to account on behalf of residents and helps review and improve services and functions run by the Council and its local partners.
- 7.2 The proposed Work Programme has implications for Members' time and the resources of the council devoted to scrutinizing the issues included.

Community Safety

No

Data Protection

No

Equalities

Yes – scrutiny of the services provided eg by registered providers of social housing will investigate how some of the most vulnerable people in the district, including those with protected characteristics, receive housing services.

Environmental Sustainability

Yes – although not subject to a further Task and Finish Group, the proposed Work Programme envisages the Overview and Scrutiny Committee receiving reports on the progress of the council's Environmental and Climate Forum.

Financial

No

Health and Safety

No

Human Resources

No

Human Rights

No

Legal

Yes - scrutiny is enshrined in Statute (the Local Government Act 2000) as amended by the Localism Act 2011.

Specific Wards

No

8.0 Background papers, appendices and other relevant material

8.1 Appendix A – Draft Work Programme

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James.ellis@eastherts.gov.uk

Report Author: Lorraine Blackburn, Scrutiny Officer, Tel: 01279 502172.
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Appendix A

Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Audit and Governance Committee - Consolidated Work Programmes 2020/21

(this is a working document and is subject to regular amendment)

Meeting Date Overview and scrutiny	Topic and Notes	Lead Member and Officer	Meeting Date Audit and Governance	Topic and Notes	Lead Member and Officer
15 September 2020	<p>Update on the progress in relation to the Climate Change Action Plan and progress in relation to the 2030 Carbon neutrality aspirations.</p> <p><i>With the agreement of Members at the last (June 2020) meeting, updates would be presented prior to each meeting.</i></p>	Executive Member for Environmental sustainability and David Thorogood	22 September 2020	External Audit Update	Suresh Patel, Ernst Young

Appendix A

Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Audit and Governance Committee - Consolidated Work Programmes 2020/21

(this is a working document and is subject to regular amendment)

Meeting Date Overview and scrutiny	Topic and Notes	Lead Member and Officer	Meeting Date Audit and Governance	Topic and Notes	Lead Member and Officer
	Social Housing – Report of the Task and Finish Group (see note below).	Head of Housing and Health		SIAS Update	Simon Martin SIAS Audit Manager
	Large Scale Projects – Project Management in terms of Expenditure Vs Budget, delivery timescales <i>Members' briefing provided on 16 July</i>	Respective Project Managers .		SAFs Update	Nick Jennings Head of Service (SAFs)

Appendix A

Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Audit and Governance Committee - Consolidated Work Programmes 2020/21

(this is a working document and is subject to regular amendment)

Meeting Date Overview and scrutiny	Topic and Notes	Lead Member and Officer	Meeting Date Audit and Governance	Topic and Notes	Lead Member and Officer
	<i>on Hertford Theatre. Request by Councillor Goldspink for an update on Hartham Leisure</i>				
	Policy for Enforcing Standards for Private Sector Landlords	Head of Housing and Health		Strategic Risk Register Quarterly Update	Graham Mulley Risk Assurance Manager
	Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2021/22	Head of Revenues and Benefits Shared Services		Annual Governance Statement	Head of Strategic Finance and property
				Statement of Accounts 2019/20	Head of Strategic Finance and Property

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Meeting Date Overview and scrutiny	Topic and Notes	Lead Member and Officer	Meeting Date Audit and Governance	Topic and Notes	Lead Member and Officer
	Work Programme	Lorraine Blackburn, Scrutiny Officer		Financial Monitoring Quarter 1	Head of Strategic Finance and Property
3 Nov 2020	How the Council reacted to the Corona Virus	Invitation to the Leader and CE to present an interim report	17 November 2020	Section 106 Agreements: a) review of policy and also of the receipt and b) the utilisation of funds received	Helen Standen Dep CE and Jackie Bruce Infrastructure and Contributions Spend Manager
	Work Programme	Lorraine Blackburn, Scrutiny Officer		Corporate Budget Monitoring Quarter 2	Ben Wood, Head of Communications Strategy and Policy and Steven Linett Head of Strategic

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Meeting Date Overview and scrutiny	Topic and Notes	Lead Member and Officer	Meeting Date Audit and Governance	Topic and Notes	Lead Member and Officer
					Finance
				Treasury Management Outturn 2019/20 and Treasury Management Mid-Year Review 2020/21	Head of Strategic Finance
	Annual Complaints Report	Head of Communications, Strategy and Policy		Budget 2021/22 and MTFP Plan 2021-2024 Proposals	Head of Strategic Finance and Property
	Performance Report Quarters 1 and 2	Head of Communications Strategy and Policy		Standards Update	James Ellis Head of Legal and Democratic Services

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Meeting Date Overview and scrutiny	Topic and Notes	Lead Member and Officer	Meeting Date Audit and Governance	Topic and Notes	Lead Member and Officer
	Revenues and Benefits Annual Report	Head of Revenues and Benefits Shared Services		Strategic Risk Monitoring 2020/21 Quarter 2	Graham Mully, Insurance and Risk Business Advisor
	Environmental Climate Change	Head of Housing and Health			
8 Dec 2020				Work Programme	Lorraine Blackburn, Scrutiny Officer
	Presentation by the PCC Mr David Lloyd and Cl Orton			GDPR and Data Retention	James Ellis Head of Legal and Democratic Services
				Members' Constitution Review Group	James Ellis Head of Legal and Democratic Services

PLEASE NOTE THAT THERE WILL BE A JOINT MEETING OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY AND AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEES ON 12 JANUARY 2021* (this may be a one item agenda) (to be confirmed)

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Meeting Date Overview and scrutiny	Topic and Notes	Lead Member and Officer	Meeting Date Audit and Governance	Topic and Notes	Lead Member and Officer
2 February 2021	Parking Recommendations – Executive Responses		12 January 2021	*Budget 2021/22 and Medium Term Financial Plan 2021-24-	Steven Linnett Head of Strategic Finance and property
				Unit Costs Report on Benchmarking	Steven Linnett Head of Strategic Finance and property
	Annual Scrutiny Report			Investment Strategy 2021/22	Steven Linnett Head of Strategic Finance and property
				Capital strategy and Minimum revenue Policy Provision 2021/22	Steven Linnett Head of Strategic Finance and property
				SIAS Internal Audit Plan	Simon Martin

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Meeting Date Overview and scrutiny	Topic and Notes	Lead Member and Officer	Meeting Date Audit and Governance	Topic and Notes	Lead Member and Officer
				Progress Report	
				Internal Audit Progress Report	
				Internal Audit Plan 2021/22	
				External Auditors Annual Audit Letter 2019/20	
				Financial Management 2020/21 Quarter 2 forecast to Year End	Steven Linnett
				External Audit Fees Letter	
				External Auditors	

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Meeting Date Overview and scrutiny	Topic and Notes	Lead Member and Officer	Meeting Date Audit and Governance	Topic and Notes	Lead Member and Officer
				Report on grant Claim Certification for Year ended 31 March 2021	
			16 February 2021		

Updates

Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Audit and Governance
Parking Policies - Report of the Task and Finish	Complaints lodged with the Monitoring Officer

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Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Audit and Governance Committee - Consolidated Work Programmes 2020/21

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Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Audit and Governance
<p>Group following consideration by the Executive: Update</p> <p>Report considered by Executive on 24 November 2020 which agreed a number of recommendations.</p>	<p>(Head of Democratic and Legal Support Services). When there are updates.</p> <p>Changes to Constitution Review Update (Head of Democratic and Legal Support Services): When there are updates.</p>
<p>Enhancing the Council's working arrangements with Social Housing providers (Report of the Task and Finish Group to the Executive)</p> <p>Update: Report and recommendations to the Executive (6 October) was "held over" at Executive Pre until a "bigger piece of work" had been carried out. Updates will follow as and when further information becomes available.</p>	

Looking Forward - End of 2020 to 2021

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Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Audit and Governance Committee - Consolidated Work Programmes 2020/21

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Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Due date	Audit and Governance	Due Date
Review of capital projects in the Council's Capital Programme (Project Managers)	Presentation provided on Capital Projects review on 11 November at all Member Briefing	Quarterly Corporate Budget Monitor – Quarter 3 December 2020	30 March 2021 (executive) Due to the timetable of meetings it is not possible to produce the report and send it to an Audit & Governance Committee meeting prior to consideration by Executive. The report will be circulated to Members of the Committee when ready and views sort and reported to Executive.
Report by Centre for Governance and Scrutiny	Work Shop to be provided to both O&S	Standards Model Code	May 2121

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Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Audit and Governance Committee - Consolidated Work Programmes 2020/21

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Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Due date	Audit and Governance	Due Date
(formerly the CfPS) Review of East Herts Council	and A&G on 3 December 2020		
Annual Scrutiny Report (Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer)	To be updated following input by the Workshop then presented to Members	GDPR and data retention	May 2021
RIPA and Use of Social Media - report back (Head of Legal and Democratic Services)	June 2021	Section 106 Contributions (report annually)	November 2121
Cultural Strategy	2 February 2021		
Environmental Sustainability Action Plan (Agreed to report twice a year)	May 2021 November 2021		
Carbon Reduction report	November 2021		
Corporate Plan Regular Updates to OS	May 2021		

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Notes:

Members will note the new format of the Consolidated Work Programme. It was felt that by combining both work programmes might provide Members with a better insight into the issues to be considered by both committees and respective timeframes and so aid the process of scrutiny. Additionally, Members should note that the Chairman and Vice Chairman of both Committees are now meeting quarterly with the Leader and Deputy Leader to consider both work programmes in the context of the Council's Forward Plan to facilitate better scrutiny and review where necessary.

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